



# Inside ICE

## GARCIA REPRESENTS UNITED STATES AT U.N. CHILD SEX TOURISM MEETING

Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia represented the United States October 20 on a panel discussion at the United Nations regarding child sex tourism.

The session, hosted by the Department of State along with World Vision, presented a unique opportunity to share the best practices of four nations – the United States, France, Brazil, and the Philippines – while the General Assembly met to discuss Third Committee social issues. Assistant Secretary Garcia discussed “Landmark Legislation, Investigating and Prosecuting Perpetrators,” noting particularly that the PROTECT Act, signed by President Bush in April 2003, has provided powerful new tools to American law enforcement to stop the scourge of child sex tourism.

ICE made the first seven arrests under the child sex tourism provisions of the PROTECT Act. The first of those arrested, Michael Lewis Clark, 71, was recently sentenced to nearly eight years in prison. Several others have already pleaded guilty and await sentencing.

ICE’s child sex tourism



Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia, second from right, talks with fellow panel members during a break in a conference on child sex tourism at the United Nations in New York, N.Y. Other panel members shown in the photo include Latin pop singer Ricky Martin, left, a leader in the campaign to end the sexual exploitation of children; Ambassador John Miller, second from left, Director of the U.S. State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons; and Ms. Lourdes Balanon, right, Undersecretary for Policy and Programs, Department of Social Welfare and Development for the Philippines.

investigations are part of a comprehensive effort to protect children from foreign national sexual predators, human smugglers and traffickers of children, those who trade in child pornography on the Internet, and child sex tourists.

Launched by Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge and

Assistant Secretary Garcia on July 9, 2003, Operation Predator has resulted in the arrest of more than 4,200 individuals who now face criminal or immigration-related charges. More than 1,500 foreign nationals have been deported under the program. Foreign law enforcement agencies, acting on ICE investigative leads, have arrested more than 860 individuals.

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# ICE TERROR INVESTIGATION WINS CONVICTION

An ongoing financial investigation by ICE agents in northern Virginia resulted in the October 12 conviction of Soliman S. Biheiri, 52, on charges that he lied to federal agents about his business deals with a top official from the terrorist organization Hamas.

## FINANCIAL/TRADE INVESTIGATIONS

After just a few hours of deliberation, a federal jury in Alexandria, Va., found that Biheiri, an Egyptian native who ran an Islamic investment firm in New Jersey called BMI, Inc., had engaged in business transactions in the 1990s with Mousa Abu Marzook, a designated terrorist and leader of Hamas, and had lied about those deals to ICE agents.

Federal prosecutors said that Biheiri had deliberately deceived ICE agents during a June 15, 2003, interview in which he told agents he had no business or personal ties to Marzook, after arriving at Dulles International Airport on a flight from Cairo, Egypt.

At trial, ICE agents presented financial records and other evidence indicating that Biheiri had engaged in at least \$1 million worth of business transactions with Marzook before and after Marzook was designated

as a terrorist by the U.S. government in August 1995. Court records also indicated that Biheiri invested some of Marzook's funds in real estate developments in Oxon Hill, Md., and other locations in the United States. Marzook had lived in the metropolitan Washington, D. C., area before being deported from the United States to Jordan by the legacy U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in 1997.

"Today's conviction is an important step in our efforts to root out those who illegally conceal their ties to known terrorists," said Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia. "By lying to ICE agents, Soliman Biheiri sought to hide his business and social relationship with a U.S.- designated terrorist and leader of Hamas."

Immediately before the trial, Biheiri pleaded guilty to a separate charge of unlawfully procuring a U.S. passport. A sentencing hearing for Biheiri is set for October 29. Biheiri was convicted of immigration fraud last year and sentenced to one year in prison.



**Soliman S. Biheiri**

The case against Biheiri is the result of a long-term financial investigation into alleged terror financing operations in northern Virginia being conducted by ICE agents, with assistance from the IRS and the FBI.

## LESC SETS RECORD ON RESPONSES

ICE's Law Enforcement Support Center (LESC) has set a new standard for supporting federal, state and local law enforcement agencies nationwide by providing timely responses to nearly 670,000 immigration requests for assistance in a single year - an increase of 12.3 percent.

Every day of the year, 24 hours per day, the LESC, located in Williston, Vt., provides support to law enforcement agencies nationwide by researching and providing information on the immigration status of foreign nationals who are the subject of police investigations.

The 300-person unit receives elec-

tronic inquiries from law enforcement organizations and typically provides responses within 10 minutes. This information enables police in the field to make important decisions about officer and public safety.

The LESC receives electronic inquiries from police via the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System. During Fiscal Year 2004, the LESC provided responses to 667,460 requests for assistance from police agencies in all 50 states. This eclipses the FY 2003 record of 594,352 responses.

Inside ICE is an e-newsletter produced by the ICE Office of Public Affairs to inform the public about the mission, operations and activities of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Please send comments and contributions to:

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Russ Bergeron  
Editor

# ICE BREAKS INTERNATIONAL DRUG MONEY CASE

A multi-agency undercover investigation led by ICE special agents from has resulted in the indictment of 24 individuals for their role in a complex drug money laundering conspiracy that spanned the United States, South America, Europe and the Caribbean.

## FINANCIAL/TRADE INVESTIGATIONS

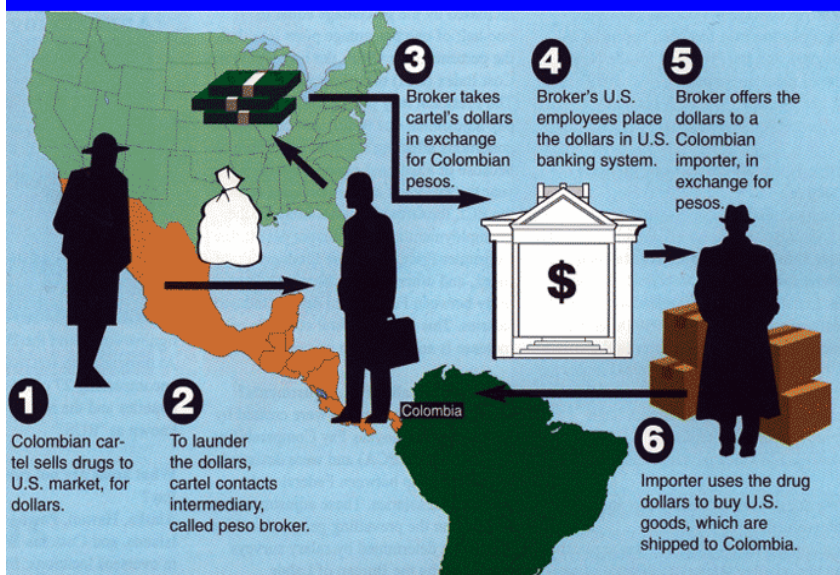
ICE agents arrested 14 people October 15 in Puerto Rico, Colombia, and St. Maarten, N.A. Five others had already been arrested in the investigation. The investigation has thus far seized roughly 250 kilograms of cocaine, 11 kilograms of heroin, 12 domestic and international bank accounts, at least \$900,000 cash and an assortment of weapons and vehicles.

Roberto G. Medina, the ICE Special Agent-in-Charge for Puerto Rico, said, "This operation combined the best investigative techniques of U. S. and foreign law enforcement to dismantle a money laundering organization whose reach spanned the globe."

The investigation targeted an organization based in Bogotá, Colombia, allegedly led by brothers Juan Isidro Toloza-Pena and Juan Andres Toloza-Pena. The indictment says the brothers and 21 co-conspirators arranged for the smuggling of cocaine and heroin from Colombia and Venezuela to the continental United States, Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles and Europe.

The defendants then used a complex system known as the Black Market Peso Exchange to launder their illicit drug proceeds, the indictment alleges. The Black Market Peso Exchange is a decades-old money laundering infrastructure that is esti-

### Money Laundering Through the Black Market Peso Exchange



imated to handle billions worth of illicit dollars annually. It is among the primary means by which Colombian drug cartels convert their U.S.-based drug dollars into "clean" pesos that they can use in Colombia.

According to the indictment, the defendants delivered large sums of drug cash to individuals in Miami and Puerto Rico and instructed that the cash be introduced into the U.S. banking system and wired to specified bank accounts throughout the United States, Colombia, Costa Rica, and China, for ultimate payment to the Colombian owners of the money. As part of the conspiracy, the defendants also created and invested in allegedly legitimate businesses to conceal the nature and source of the money, the indictment alleges.

As part of the money laundering forfeiture charge, the U.S. government is seeking forfeiture of 14 properties in Colombia and 16 domestic and international bank accounts for a total of \$4.05 million. Under the drug forfeiture charge, the U.S. government is seeking for-

feiture of \$549,075 against any property derived from the proceeds of this activity.

Penalties for the narcotics offenses alleged in the indictment range from 10 years to life imprisonment and fines up to \$4 million. Penalties for the money laundering offense range from a fine of not more than \$500,000, or twice the value of the property involved in the transaction, whichever is greater, or imprisonment of 20 years, or both.

ICE agents in Puerto Rico and Miami, as well as the ICE Attaché offices in Colombia, Venezuela, France, and the Caribbean conducted the investigation. Other agencies participating in the investigation include the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigations Division, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, the Puerto Rico Police Department, the San Juan Municipal Police, and the Puerto Rico Bureau of Special Investigations.



## ICE DEPORTS FAKE DOC SELLER TO PAKISTAN

ICE officers in Denver have deported a Pakistani man who sold fake state identity cards to illegal aliens, allowing them access to secure military installations.

### ***PUBLIC SECURITY***

The removal of Raja Ur Rehman Siddiq, 40, was completed October 11 when he arrived in Pakistan on board a commercial flight escorted by ICE agents. Siddiq, who had been in U.S. government custody since April 2003, was initially convicted of illegal entry into the United States, sentenced to time served, and returned to ICE custody in January.

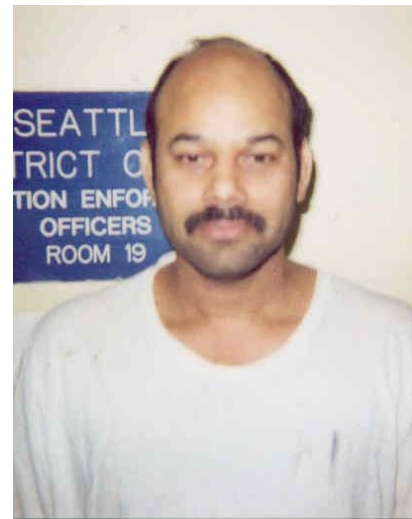
The legal permanent resident first came to the attention of ICE and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) when agents discovered he was selling "look-alike" Colorado identification cards at his "dollar store" business in Colorado Springs. While the cards closely resembled the official state IDs, they contained disclaimers warning the cards were

not "government issued." ICE's subsequent investigation revealed that illegal aliens used the cards to gain access to secure U.S. military installations in the area.

"Anyone who knowingly and indiscriminately sells phony identity cards is putting the security of our communities and even our country at risk," said Scott Johns, Assistant Chief Counsel for ICE in Denver. "Documents like this could potentially be used by terrorists or other dangerous criminals to obscure their identities and cover their tracks."

ICE fought for Siddiq's removal alleging that he lied on his original immigrant visa application in 2000, failing to disclose he had been prevented from illegally entering the U.S. through Hong Kong in 1999, and in 1992 when he attempted to use a U.S. passport obtained from a source in Spain.

During the immigration proceedings, ICE and FBI agents pointed to other factors in Siddiq's case that also raised cause for concern, in-



**Raja Ur Rehman Siddiq**

cluding his possession of multiple identity and travel documents from numerous countries, his role in distributing the "look-alike" ID cards, and the fact that he owned the equipment needed to produce fraudulent documents in the future.

An immigration judge issued a final removal order against Siddiq in September.

## ALAMOUDI GETS 23 YEARS FOR TERROR SUPPORT

A man who was part of a plot by the Libyan government to assassinate the leader of Saudi Arabia has been sentenced to 23 years in prison.

### ***PUBLIC SECURITY***

Abdurahman M. Alamoudi, a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Eritrea, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Claude M. Hilton in Alexandria, Va., October 15 on charges related to his activities in the United States and abroad with nations and organizations that have ties to terrorism.

Alamoudi devised a scheme to ob-

tain money from Libya and other sources overseas for transmission into the United States without attracting the attention of federal law enforcement officials. Alamoudi made at least 10 trips to Libya, many lasting as long as five days, and met with Libyan government officials.

Initially, during a meeting on March 13, 2003, Alamoudi and Libyan government officials discussed creating "headaches" and disruptions in Saudi Arabia. As the scheme continued, however, Alamoudi learned that the actual objective was the assassination of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah. Alamoudi participated in recruiting participants for this plot and

facilitating the transfer of hundreds of thousands of dollars of cash from the Libyans.

Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia said, "The sentence handed down reflects the seriousness of Alamoudi's crimes. His conviction is the result of an extensive joint investigation by ICE, the FBI and IRS, in which agents tracked suitcases stuffed with cash, unearthed Swiss bank accounts, and documented meetings with shadowy figures around the globe. This case demonstrates how ICE is applying its legal authorities under the Joint Terrorism Task Force umbrella to address threats to our homeland."

## ICE REUNITES INFANT WITH MOM IN SMUGGLING HOSTAGE SCHEME

ICE special agents in Houston and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Border Patrol agents teamed up to reunite a Guatemalan mother and her four-month-old girl October 8 after smugglers separated the two in an all-too-common hostage plot to ensure payment.

### ***PUBLIC SECURITY***

The incident began near the Mexico border when Border Patrol agents from Laredo Sector's Freer Station arrested several individuals being smuggled into the United States after the smugglers guiding them had fled.

A Guatemalan woman in this group said the smugglers took her four-month-old infant and said the baby would be returned in Houston after they received payment.

Border Patrol contacted ICE about the kidnapping. Special Agent-in-Charge Joseph R. Webber, who leads ICE investigations in Houston, immediately dispatched a special agent to make contact with individuals at a residence where Webber was told the infant was located. The special agent confirmed that the missing infant was at the location. ICE agents went to the residence and took custody of the infant, who was unharmed. The mother was later escorted to Houston and reunited with her daughter.

"This is yet another grim example of how far smugglers will go to make a hefty profit," said Webber. "Smugglers have no regard for human life."



**Deputy Assistant Secretary John Clark speaks at a Washington, D.C., press conference to kick off the "Child Sex Tourism Prevention Project." The project is a global program led by World Vision, a non-profit relief and development organization, in partnership with ICE and the U.S. State Department.**

## FPS REACHES HIGH LEVELS FOR ARRESTS, SEIZURES IN FY 2004

ICE's Federal Protective Service (FPS) reported a significant boost in arrests and seizures for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 - the first year for FPS as part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

### ***PUBLIC SECURITY***

FPS is responsible for providing security and law enforcement services to more than 8,800 federally owned and leased facilities nationwide. In this role, FPS provides law enforcement and security for more than one million tenants and daily visitors at federal facilities nationwide.

In FY 2004, officers of FPS were responsible for 4,426 arrests - a 58 percent increase over the previous fiscal year. In addition, FPS agents responded to 430 bomb threats and 877 calls about suspicious packages and other items at federal facilities.

Noteworthy convictions include that of an Indiana man who was sentenced to three years in prison after he threatened to shoot a Social Security Administration judge. In another FPS case, eight people were sentenced to a combined 19 years in federal prison and 24 years of probation for their roles in an ATM theft scheme.

Furthermore, FPS stopped 548,849 prohibited items - including knives, canisters of Mace, pepper spray, and other weapons - from being carried into federal properties. This represents an increase of more than 400 percent over the previous year's seizures.

"The rapid increase in arrests and seizures in this most recent fiscal year illustrates how FPS is continuing to become a more effective law enforcement entity under the Department of Homeland Security," said FPS Director Wendell C. Shingler. "As part of ICE, we're now better positioned than ever before to share information and to leverage our enforcement efforts, all in service of our goal of providing a safer, more secure environment for federal employees and the American people."

In FY 2004, FPS also provided law enforcement and security during 1,668 public demonstrations of various sizes, as well as protecting federal properties and employees during the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, the G-8 Summit in Georgia and the International Monetary Fund/World Bank Meeting in Washington, D.C.

## Inside ICE

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## U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

**U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security, responsible for the enforcement of immigration, customs, infrastructure and transportation security laws.**

### ***SEC. RIDGE IN NYC***



*Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, left, is shown visiting ICE's New York Office of Investigations, where he met with Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia, right, and ICE New York employees. Secretary Ridge received a briefing on a number of the office's most successful cases. Among the cases discussed was an ongoing investigation in which ICE agents identified more than 65 victims of human trafficking. In June 2004, ICE agents arrested three individuals — a man, his wife and their daughter — for their alleged involvement in the criminal human trafficking operation.*